

APPROVED: Meeting No. 24-92

ATTEST: 

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 17-92

May 4, 1992

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, on May 4, 1992, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember James F. Coyle

Councilmember Rose G. Krasnow

Councilmember James T. Marrinan

Councilmember David Robbins

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer and City Clerk Sharon Gran.

Re: Worksession with Senior
Citizens Commission

Helen Roberto, Chairperson, and Commission members Estelle Berberian, Armand Capozzi, Stuart Crump, Benton Hanan, James Henry, Marty Roney and Stanton Sheltra discussed the following with the Mayor and Council:

Perpetual Fund

Mr. Henry discussed the establishment last year of the perpetual fund. Interest earned on this fund is used to provide assistance to needy seniors in the form of subsidies for various programs and in the purchase of taxi coupons.

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Pump House

A number of improvements have been made to the Pump House, including a new tile floor and ceiling. The Commission recently sponsored an open house which was very successful.

Membership Fees

An increase from \$6 per year to \$12 per year has been recommended by the Commission. There are approximately 30 individuals who volunteer at the Center and receive free membership.

Transportation

Ms. Berberian expressed appreciation to the Mayor and Council for responding to the transportation needs of senior citizens. The addition of a third part-time driver has been a great help, and they now have a dependable service. The Call 'N Ride program meets the transportation needs for medical appointments.

Volunteer Activities

Helen Roberto reported that the Commission will continue its volunteer activities including Hometown Holidays, Grandparents Day, distribution of surplus food, working with GROWS (Grass Roots Organization for the Well-Being of Seniors).

The Commission will also continue to visit nursing homes, work closely with the Pump House and participate in the David Scull Community Center mentor program.

Support of Funding

The Commission supports the request of Community Ministries for \$30,000 for Home Health Care for the Elderly. This is an excellent program which allows individuals to remain in their own homes.

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The need for an additional \$12,000 in FY93 over the proposed budget for the Call 'N Ride program was reviewed by Mrs. Roberto. For a number of years, the taxi coupon books have been purchased from the County at a cost of \$22.50 each, and the cost has now increased. In order to meet the growing demand for books by Rockville residents and maintain the current value of the coupon books, staff is proposing to print coupon books in-house and to operate independently of the County. The budget decrease of 5% will force a decrease in the value of the books to \$18, equivalent to one seven-mile trip each month. The Commission requested an additional \$12,538 over the proposed FY93 budget to maintain the current service level.

There is one adult day care in this area located at the Lone Oak Center. Their rent will be increased significantly beginning next year, and Mrs. Roberto asked if the City could provide some rental assistance.

Outreach to Recruit Senior Volunteers

Mr. Hanan referenced a federal grant through Project CARE which GROWS has received to fund one part-time employee. This individual will be responsible for ensuring that needy seniors are made aware of available services and receive the proper referrals.

He noted that seniors need to volunteer to put meaning in their own lives and to give something back in service and purpose to the community.

A Volunteer Fair has been suggested and is in the planning stages. The purpose of the fair will be to match up individuals with the needs of participating agencies. Councilmember Coyle asked if the volunteer activity would be ongoing or a one-time task/event and was told that it could be both.

Mrs. Roberto concluded by stating that they are proud of the Senior Center and staff. Burt Hall was congratulated on his appointment as Director of Recreation and Parks.

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Re: Worksession with Rockville
Seniors, Inc.

Paul Roney, Chairperson, and members Don Bokelman, Lois Darling, Alverta Dronenburg, Ruth Hausafus, Ray Hughes, Loretta Pelletier, Helen Roberto, Murray Stein and Ira Walters discussed the following with the Mayor and Council:

1992 Major Accomplishments

The Senior Center recently celebrated its 10th anniversary at which the charter members and staff were recognized. The Center now has over 2,000 members, 97% of whom are City residents.

The five-year plan for remodeling has commenced, with the construction of a ramp for the disabled and installation of a new sprinkler system.

Special Projects

A Volunteer Tea is planned for May 19, at which awards will be presented to 160 volunteers. Elections to the RSI Board will be held that same day.

RSI will be participating in the Memorial Day Parade with a float honoring our troops who fought on Iwo Jima.

The Senior Center garden plots are in better shape than ever, and the Parks crew was commended for their outstanding work in tilling.

Donations of \$2,300 were received for the piano fund.

The seniors answered approximately 250 letters to Santa.

The project of knitting hats and scarves was a big success, and these hand-knit items were donated to 12 area shelters.

RSI contributed \$2,000 to the monthly birthday fund.

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A \$90,000 grant from the Maryland Office of Aging was approved in FY92 for Senior Center improvements, and \$33,000 has been tentatively approved for next year. Matching grants from the City would be applied to the five-year plan.

Fundraising Events

Ms. Dronenburg reported that \$6,000 was raised at the spring yard sale. The fall holiday sale will take place on December 5.

The gift shop nets approximately \$1,000 per month, the thrift shop \$700-\$900 per month, and the weekly bingo \$1,000 per month.

The raffle for a mahogany chest made by Murray Stein raised \$1,400.

Budget

This year's projected budget is \$55,000 and, to date, \$51,600 has been raised. Receipts from Bingo are slightly lower than anticipated although the gift and thrift shops receipts are increasing. RSI committed \$100,000 to the five-year capital plan plus \$11,000 to the annual operating budget.

Re: Worksession with Planning
Commission

Nina Weisbroth, Chairperson, and Commission members Gloria Atlas, Charles Haughey and David Melnick discussed the following with the Mayor and Council:

Irvington Farm Annexation

Mayor Duncan advised that the third and final draft of the annexation agreement is being prepared. The final draft will be submitted to the County Council and, if they approve of the change in general commercial, the annexation agreement will set forth where this zoning will be sited. If the Council turns it down, the property will be placed in the R-S (Suburban Residential) Zone.

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Ms. Atlas referenced the trade-off between office and general commercial in the annexation agreement, noting that the office square footage is consistent with the Shady Grove Plan but there is a significant increase in commercial. Mayor Duncan indicated that flexibility is needed. If a limit were to be placed on square footage of a particular use, the annexation agreement would require amendment for even a small change. Construction will not commence until the traffic study has been completed. A certain level of residential is required, but there is flexibility with the other land uses.

Ms. Atlas noted the implications regarding traffic. In the second draft annexation agreement, Montgomery County was given the opportunity to comment on non-residential transit-oriented uses. She fears that this will lead to a requirement that developers have to mitigate traffic outside of Rockville which has not been required in the past.

Mr. Herst, Director of Community Development, responded that this language was inserted by the County in the first draft.

Councilmember Krasnow noted that the traffic reciprocity should be worked out now rather than having to deal with this issue later.

Town Center

Ms. Weisbroth advised that the Commission is nearing completion of its review of the draft Master Plan. Ms. Atlas commented that there has been a great deal of discussion regarding mixed use and looking at more flexibility.

Councilmember Coyle referenced the draft Economic Development Plan and commented that the Commission should be looking at this document in their review of the Master Plan. Although the Commission has been looking at the economic implications, Mayor Duncan requested that the

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Economic Development Plan draft be distributed to the Planning Commission for their review in conjunction with the Master Plan.

It was agreed that a separate worksession would be scheduled with the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council to discuss Town Center issues. The tentative date for the meeting is May 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Pedestrian Access and Parking

This issue has arisen in connection with different projects, particularly related to Town Center and Courthouse Square. Ms. Atlas noted that the design standards should possibly be modified to facilitate pedestrian access to buildings from the parking areas.

Mayor Duncan suggested that the Commission discuss pedestrian access with the Traffic and Transportation Commission which has been reviewing this issue in great detail. He also noted that staff is contacting the owners of Margruder's parking lot regarding pedestrian traffic in that area.

Re: Worksession with Advisory
Commission on Public
Education

Karen Boujoukos, Chairperson, and Commission members Laurel Anchors, Robert Ekman, Lynn Fox, Izione Silva, Andre Webb and Jessica Weiss discussed the following with the Mayor and Council:

Education Forums

The forums were very time-consuming to plan, and attendance was less than anticipated. Discussion followed regarding the need for more advertising and personal contacts along with the proposal to reduce the number of forums sponsored each year. Councilmember Krasnow commented that she has been impressed with the quality of the forums and feels that, if they were limited to one

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a year, attendance would be encouraged. The Mayor and Council agreed, and the Commission was directed to proceed as they deem appropriate.

Contacts with MCPS

It was noted that the Commission has strengthened its contacts with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The area director regularly attends monthly Commission meetings, and the Commissioners frequently contact the principals and PTA presidents of Rockville schools.

Work Plan for Next Year

The Commission has developed a number of suggestions for future projects:

Education Fair. Co-sponsoring with MCPS or MCCPTA (Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations) a 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. or one-half day fair highlighting successful school programs such as "family math night" or "homework hotline." This would be an opportunity for parents, students and educators to look at what other schools are doing.

Community Service Day. The Commission would like to work on a project with the Mayor and Council related to one of Rockville's schools.

Innovations in Education Award. These awards would be given to businesses which form partnerships with City schools.

Councilmember Krasnow asked if there has been any involvement by local businesses in education. Ms. Boujoukos referenced the adopt-a-school program which the Commission had unsuccessfully tried to implement with the Chamber of Commerce two years ago.

Cable TV programs. There are many ways in which cable could be used to facilitate the Commission's mission. Programs such as "outstanding student of the month" could be developed. Different schools could be highlighted on cable with schools being given the opportunity to write their

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own scripts, videotape special events, etc.

A new MCPS program, "A World of Difference," was referenced, and it was suggested that this would be an excellent program to highlight.

Rockville School Report Cards. Ms. Silva indicated that an outgrowth of the recent forum, "Schools for Success: the Maryland State Plan" is the possibility of enhancing the school report card. Information is available from the Maryland State Performance Program, and such an enhancement would provide more information for taxpayers and businesses as to activities specific to an individual school.

In implementing the enhanced school report card, contact with MCPS must be established to secure authorization for the additional information to be included. The Commission would solicit from residents the types of information of interest to them, gather such information and put it together in an easy-to-follow format. One suggestion was to have an insert in **Rockville Reports**, setting forth the "report card" for each school in the city.

Councilmember Krasnow expressed concern with comparing schools. Mayor Duncan indicated that the Commission could pick and choose what items or issues they want to include in the report.

Councilmember Robbins asked if there had ever been a student member on the Commission and was told "no." Councilmember Coyle indicated that he liked the idea of a student member, and Mayor Duncan requested that the Commission discuss this suggestion and make a recommendation to the Mayor and Council.

Councilmember Coyle asked if the Commission would have an opportunity to review the community's education needs beyond primary and secondary school and, with the growing ethnic

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population, whether non-traditional educational approaches had been considered. These issues have been raised before, and the Commission believes it should remain focused on primary and secondary education.

Recognition of students was discussed, and Mayor Duncan requested the Commission to forward information to the City Clerk for scheduling on future agendas.

Re: Worksession with Science
and Technology
Commission

Kenneth Falci, Chairperson, and Commission members Gloria Gridley, Ellen Watson and Michael Weickert discussed the following with the Mayor and Council:

Science Center

The Commission stands ready and willing to bring science to the community and will continue to provide assistance to the Rockville Consortium for Science in meeting this objective.

After visiting science centers in Prince George's County and Philadelphia, the Commission members have a general sense of the different funding mechanisms available.

Science Day

The Commission would like to see the concept of Science Day continue throughout the year as a means of fulfilling their mission to bring science to Rockville. Appreciation was expressed for the funding this year which enabled the Commission to give out some very nice prizes at Science Day.

Mr. Weickert indicated that Science Day was not intended to be only for children and that there were many exhibits for adults. Every school had been contacted in advance in an attempt to coordinate the school science fairs with Science Day; however, the schools required a longer lead time and it is hoped that this can be accomplished next year.

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The City could help with publicity for Science Day and give some advice as to avenues to pursue for the future. A higher attendance figure for Science Day could serve as an indicator of the need for a science center.

Councilmember Krasnow agreed that publicity could be improved and commented that it was a great event. Mayor Duncan suggested that the Senior Center be used for Science Day if it would meet the needs, thus saving a significant amount of money being paid for the use of Montgomery College.

Stormwater Management Task Force

Ms. Watson indicated that there have been discussions regarding what will happen when the task force completes its mission. The Science and Technology Commission is willing to take on the educational aspect, that is, why stormwater management is needed.

Other

The Commission's mission for the future is to support or co-sponsor any groups to bring science to the community. This could be in the form of lectures by commission members, nature activities, astronomy night, science picnic, honoring individuals who have advanced science in Rockville.

Mr. Falci indicated that the Commission is expanding and is in the process of interviewing more candidates. Councilmember Coyle noted that the Commission is comprised of unique individuals who are well-known in their respective fields. It was suggested that if the Commission desires to pursue a lecture series, initially the lectures could be held at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

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Councilmember Krasnow suggested that the Commission may want to look into recycling which is a topic of interest to everyone. The Commission was asked to make recommendations in this regard.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m., to convene again in Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m. on May 5, 1992, or at the call of the Mayor.